



**AJOKE AYISAT AFOLABI**  
**FOUNDATION**

A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

NEWSLETTER

# IN SUPPORT OF 16 DAYS ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

**THEME:**

**Invest to Prevent Violence  
Against Women and Girls**



**25 NOVEMBER - 10 DECEMBER 2023**

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INTRODUCTION:

AJOKE AYISAT AFOLABI FOUNDATION (AAAF) is a non-governmental organization alleviating poverty through education, skills and financial empowerment for widows, orphans and vulnerable persons. Over 30,000 persons have benefited from a combination of our Support A Child with Knowledge to reduce Poverty (SACK-Poverty) project and Vocational Skills Acquisition Project (VSAP). In addition to providing scholarships, we build the skills of our beneficiaries through training, advocacy and viable collaborations.

Our programme focus covers:

- Education
- Economic Empowerment
- Health Sustainability
- Humanitarian Services

Vision

To be a world class Foundation, consistently, improving the wellbeing of Widows, Orphans and Vulnerable children, in Nigeria

Mission

By promoting skills development, financial assistance and opportunity to widows, orphans, vulnerable children and persons living with disabilities, AAAF inspires and empower the under privileged.

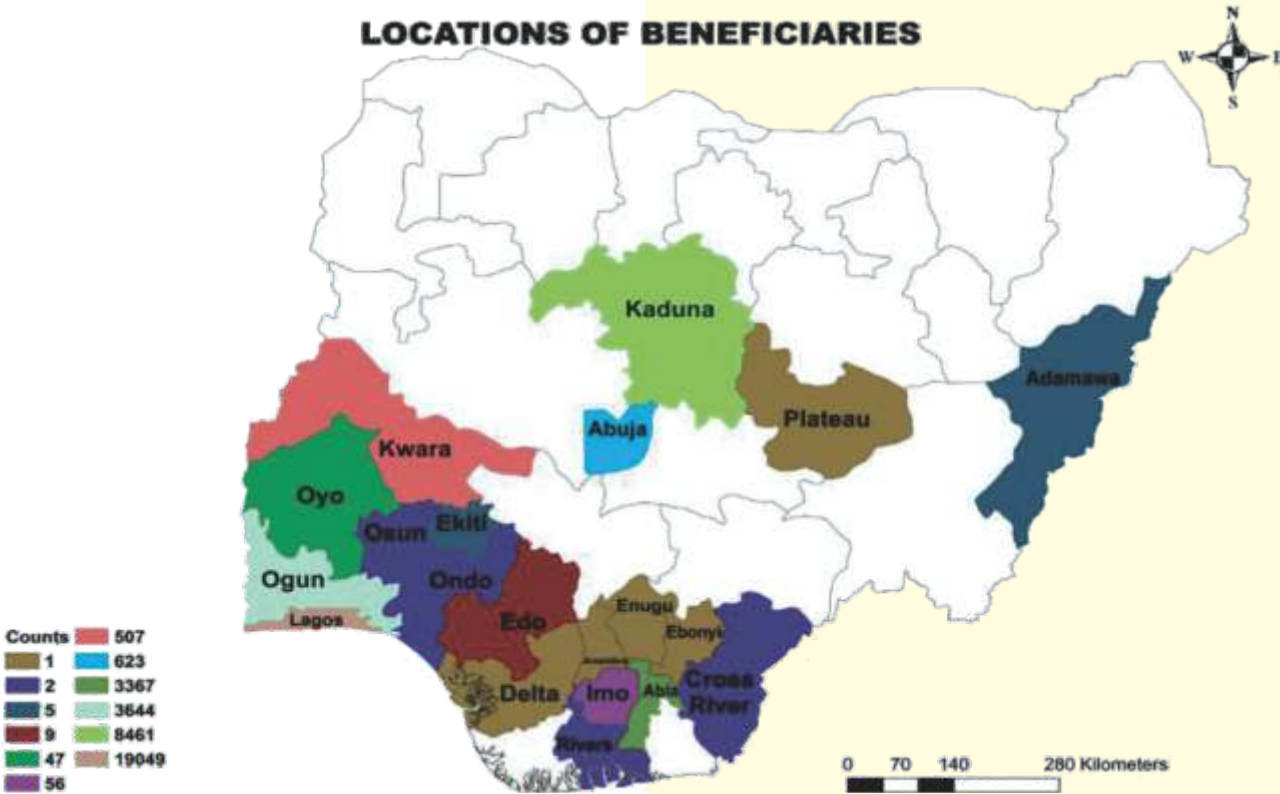
Core Values

- **Integrity:** Insisting on transparency and accountability
- **Compassion:** Driven by love and selfless service
- **Equity:** Commitment to all
- **Excellence:** Quality service delivery

Location AAAF Beneficiaries (Period Covered 2019-2023)

AAAF works with partners across 20 states of Nigeria currently, to promote access to over 30,000 people with skills, education, healthcare and welfare services. These include vulnerable children, women, particularly widows and resource poor communities, majorly in Lagos, Kaduna, Abia, Ogun, to mention just a few.

“...we build the skills of our beneficiaries through training, advocacy and viable collaborations.”



### IN A CASE OF RAPE:

Visit the nearest government owned hospitals (General hospital or federal medical center) and preserve evidence of the rape the doctor will collect in order to help prosecute perpetrators.

**You can also visit or Call the following agency for help:**

**DSVRT Ministry of Justice**  
Lagos State Secretariat Alausa  
Tel: 08137960048

**Mirabel Centre The Sexual Assault Referral Centre**  
Department of Family Medicine  
Lagos State University Teaching Hospital  
Ikeja-Lagos Tel: 08056268573

**Family Support Unit**  
Nigeria Police  
Ikeja, Lagos  
0906 288 7863

Hospital Management Board, Lagos +234 909 148 1560  
Women's Right and Health Project (WRAHP) 0812 5346052  
Lagos State Ministry of Women Affairs 0808 575 4226 or 0808 559 4141  
Project Alert on Violence against Women 0818 009 1072  
Ireti Resource Center 0700 333 3111  
NAPTIP (Trafficking) 0703 000 0203  
The Nigeria Police 0703 216 5181  
WARDC 0818 005 6401  
OPD 0708 060 1080

### BREAK THE SILENCE: END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Do you need to talk to someone?  
Help is just a phone call away

DSVRT: 0813 796 0048 | MYSD: 0907 722 3426 | OPD: 0708 060 1080 | NAPTIP: 08033975545  
FIDA: 08034623936 | WAPA: wapa@lagosststae.gov.ng | WARDC: 0818 005 6401/0805 595 1858

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE(GBV)

According to a 2023 report by UN women, approximately 243 million women and girls aged 15-49 years have experienced sexual, and/or physical, violence by their intimate partner in their lifetime. This is equivalent to one in three women and girls worldwide. A study by the World Health Organization (WHO) also made their findings on how the male gender are being affected and based on their findings they found that 1 in five men have experienced physical violence at least once in their lifetime. The study also showed that 1 in 20 men have experienced sexual violence at least once in their life time.

GBV is a pandemic encompassing physical, sexual and emotional harm directed at individuals based on their gender. It can manifest as physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. GBV is a devastating reality for millions of men, women, boys, and girls worldwide. It robs them of their fundamental human rights, impedes their development and perpetuates cycles of violence.

In addressing GBV, Ajoke Ayisat Afolabi Foundation discovered that a lot of widows face economic deprivation, physical abuse, loss of income and assets, and related, harmful practices, as well as, financial challenges especially at the demise of husbands who were breadwinners. Therefore, the Foundation considers the empowerment of widows through financial and psychosocial support as critical to promoting inclusion and helping widows overcome grief, stigmatization and ostracization, in addition to this, support services can help improve self-esteem, confidence and self-reliance on the long run.

### FACTS ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

- Violence against women (VAW) is a violation of human rights, is rooted in gender inequality, is a public health problem, and an impediment to sustainable development
- Nearly 1 in 3 (35%) women worldwide have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence, not including sexual harassment, by any perpetrator.
- Globally, 30% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime
- Adolescent girls, young women, women belonging to ethnic and other minorities,

transwomen, and women with disabilities face a higher risk of different forms of violence.

- Humanitarian emergencies may exacerbate existing violence and lead to additional forms of violence against women and girls.
- Globally between 38%-50% of murders of women are committed by intimate partners
- Violence negatively affects women's physical and mental health and well-being. It has social and economic consequences and costs for families, communities and societies
- The majority (55-95%) of women survivors of violence do not disclose or seek any type of services
- Violence against women and girls is preventable. To prevent violence, mitigate the risk factors and amplify the protective factors.

### GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV): TEENAGE PREGNANCY

One of the major causes of teen pregnancy is the absence of affectionate supervision from parents or guardians. In the current society, parents are either too busy or too permissive. Apart from the provision of basic needs, parents and guardians are not involved in the emotional stability of the girl child.

Teenagers, especially girls, go through intriguing situations and changes in which they need parental support to understand and accept the changes. They lack this affectionate supervision from their parents, they seek answers from boyfriends or someone more strong, endowed adults prey on their vulnerability to engage in sexual conducts that lead to pregnancy.

Sexual abuse can also occur when young girls go for pleasure without understanding the sexual impact. It is also evident when an adult sexually victimizes a teenage girl or a minor.

According to Centre for American Progress (CAP), an estimated 60 percent of teen girls' first pregnancies are preceded by experiences of molestation, rape, or attempted rape. A study shows that between 30 and 44 percent of teen mothers were victims of rape or attempted rape, and up to 20 percent of girls were pregnant as the direct result of rape.

Office of Justice Programs stated that 17% of the young girls who had stepfathers in their childhoods



had been sexually abused, compared to only 2% of those having biological fathers in their childhoods. Between the ages of 7 and 18, young girls are being sexually abused. About 4 in 6 girls experience child sexual abuse.

National Sexual Violence Resource Centre stated that an estimated 91% of victims of rape and sexual assault are female. Nearly 99% of perpetrators are male. Most child victims are by a parent, a close family relation, or an acquaintance. According to Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, 1 in 9 girls under the age of 18 experience sexual abuse or assault. About 75% of the population has a fear of public speaking. 90% Victims of rape or sexual abuse do not speak up due to fear of being judged or not being believed.

**HOW CAN YOU HELP:**

- Attend our awareness workshops: By participating in our workshops, you will be

able to learn more about GBV, its impact and how to prevent it.

- **Share Information:** Another way you can help prevent Gender Based Violence is by educating other about GBV and its negative impacts on victims. You can do this through your social media platform, and community events.
- **Report Incidents:** We should also make sure that we do not turn a blind eye as regards any incidents that occur relating to GBV Help create a safer community by reporting any observed GBV. Inform relevant authorities, community leaders, and support organizations.
- **Support Survivors:** We can also help out by being a listening ear and also offer assistance to survivors of GBV. Provide emotional support, connect them with resources and help them access justice.

The Foundation also held a program to commemorates the 16 days activism against Gender-Based Violence, themed: 'Unite! Invest to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls' with 1 million Signature Campaign against Gender-Based Violence, participants lend their voices through captions like stop gender-based violence, women are the future, every girl child is unique e.tc the He-for-She were not left out in the campaign.



**SURVIVORS' STORY:**

**MY HUSBAND FAMILY TOOK... THE MONEY**

*“Life has not been fair with me and my children, my husband died through inhaling of sodium Ash at the work place, he was taking to the hospital, after some day he started purging, that was when he opened up to me, we quickly took him to Eko hospital, he undergo blood transfusion before they would start the treatment, unfortunately he died before treatment started, my husband family took half of the money the company paid us as his gratuity and shared among themselves, the one giving to me was invested on our existing piggery farm before, unfortunately, after 6 month, there was an outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) in Oke-Aro, farm, all the animals worth 7 million naira died. As if that was not enough, in that same period, the house he left for me and the children was taken by the sister through diabolical means; I and the children have to run for our lives.*

*Ever since things have not been easy for us, I started managing with the children with what is left until AAAF stepped in to assist me with 2 of my children's education”*

**I WAS TOLD THAT IT'S A TABOO**

*“I became a widow 18<sup>th</sup> December 2013, after the death of my husband; we travelled to his village. After the burial, I was forced to undergo the customary rite. I was in a room for 3 days, eat with a particular plate, spoon and cup, during this period I was not allowed to give my children anything directly, and after the third day my hair was shaven. I was asked to pull off the clothes I wore including my underwear's and everything was burnt including my hair. After that I was asked to bath and put on white cloth for mourning, I wore the clothes for six months and, at the completion of the mourning period I did not go back to the village to pull off the cloth, I pull it off here in Lagos... While in the village I pleaded for my children's hair not to be shaved that I would shave it when I get back to Lagos which I did, because I was told that it's a taboo if their hair is not shave and ever since we came from the village none of them has visited except my husband's twin sister” thanks to the Foundation for always being there.*

**HIS FAMILY DENIED MY PREGNANCY**

A teenage mom, Praise, was left stranded after her boyfriend died in a car accident and her family denied her pregnancy. She started doing menial jobs to make ends meet, and one day, she met a woman who had been helped by the Ajoke Ayisat Afolabi Foundation (AAAF). Praise told the woman her story, and the woman promised to tell the Foundation about her. Luckily, the Foundation visited Praise's village for farm inspections, and the woman contacted Praise so she could meet them. Praise told the Foundation her story, and they were impressed with her plans to become self-sufficient. They

enrolled her in a fashion and designing skill acquisition training, and on the day of the foundation's stakeholders' meeting, they gifted her an industrial sewing machine.

**ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP**

Chiamaka a survivor of Gender-based violence, she had a very rough childhood even as a teenager. She started staying with her aunt at a young age because her mother didn't care for her. Her aunt couldn't afford to send her to school, so she was given to a family who promised to do so. However, the family couldn't afford it either, she went back to her aunt's place.

Chiamaka's aunt was still struggling to make ends meet, so she decided to find a job. She heard about an elderly woman in Umuahia who needed a live-in housekeeper. She went to see the woman, but the woman had travelled out of the country. Chiamaka was stranded, so she called a guy she had met at the hospital. The guy offered her a place to stay while she waited for the woman to return. One day, the guy won a lottery and came home to celebrate. He offered Chiamaka some alcohol which she declined. However, the guy had added something to the drink that made Chiamaka unconscious. When she woke up, she found out that the guy had raped her.

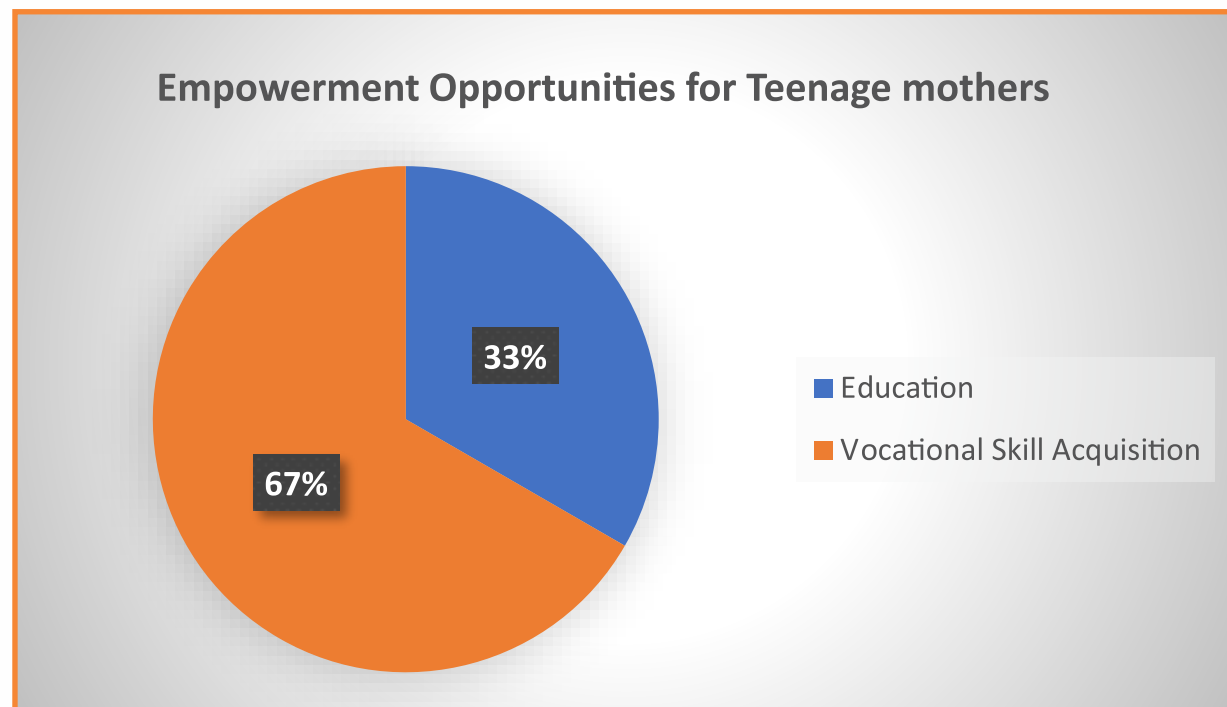
After the incident, the guy became abusive towards Chiamaka. He beat her up and told her to leave. Chiamaka left and went back to the streets. She eventually met a woman who had been helped by the Ajoke Ayisat Afolabi Foundation (AAAF). She told the woman her story, and the woman connected her to the Foundation. The foundation helped Chiamaka to give birth and set her up with a hairdressing salon. Chiamaka is now a successful hairdresser.

*I wore the clothes for six months and, at the completion of the mourning period I did not go back to the village to pull off the cloth*



**The Teenage Mothers Project:** Gender-based violence is a serious problem that affects young girls around the world, as part of AAAF intervention we provide support services for survivors of gender-

based violence. They are being reintegrated into school system and vocational skills training as captured in the chart below. This will enable them to be self-dependent.



## SURVIVORS' STORY:

### MY HUSBAND FAMILY TOOK... THE MONEY

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## GBV LEGAL/INSTITUTIONAL FRAME WORK

The legal frame work was enacted to eliminate violence in private and public life; prohibit all forms of violence against persons, particularly women and girls who are disproportionately affected; provide maximum protection and effective remedies for victims; the punishment of offenders and for other related matters.

### THE FEDERAL LEVEL:

#### THE LAWS TO PROHIBIT VIOLENCE AGAINST PERSONS (VAPP) LAW 2015

1. A person commits the offence of Rape if he or she intentionally penetrates the vaginal, anus, mouth of another person with any other part of his or her body or anything else and the other person does not consent to the penetration or the consent is obtained by force is liable to life imprisonment, where the offenders is less than 14 years is liable to 14 years imprisonment
2. A person who subjects a widow to harmful traditional practices commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding 500,000 naira or both.
3. A person who Batters his or her spouse commit an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 or to a fine not exceeding N200,000 or both.
4. A person who causes Emotional, verbal and psychological abuse on another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1-year or to a fine not exceeding 200,000 naira.

### ABIASTATE:

#### THE LAWS TO PROHIBIT VIOLENCE AGAINST PERSONS (VAPP) LAW 2019

1. Person who batters his or her spouse commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or to a fine not exceeding #200,000 or both.
2. A person who intimidates another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding #200,000 or both.
3. A person who willfully causes or inflicts physical injury on another person by means of any weapon, substance or object, commits an offence and is liable for a conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a fine not exceeding #500.000 or both.
4. A person who compel or coerces another by force or threat to engage in any conduct or act, sexually or otherwise, to the detriment

of the physical or psychological well-being of either the doer or receiver of the act or conduct, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or to a fine not exceeding #500,000 or both.

5. A person who forcefully evicts his or her spouse from his or her home or refuses him or her access into same commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not less than 2 years or to a fine of #300,000 or both.
6. A person who uses chemical or any other harmful liquid or substance on another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of life imprisonment without option of fine.

### LAGOS STATE

#### THE LAWS TO PROHIBIT VIOLENCE AGAINST PERSONS (VAPP) LAW 2017

The Lagos State Protection Against Domestic Violence Law, 2017 (VAPP Law) prescribes various punishments for offenders based on the severity of the offense committed. Here's a breakdown of the penalties for different categories of offenses under the VAPP Law:

1. **Physical Abuse:** For causing bodily harm without grievous harm: Imprisonment for not more than two years or a fine of not more than ₦500,000 or both.
2. **For causing grievous harm:** Imprisonment for not more than seven years or a fine of not more than ₦1,000,000 or both.
3. **Sexual Abuse:** For sexual assault: Imprisonment for not more than seven years or a fine of not more than ₦1,000,000 or both.
4. **For Rape:** Imprisonment for life without the possibility of parole.
5. **Emotional Abuse:** For causing emotional distress: Imprisonment for not more than six months or a fine of not more than ₦200,000 or both.
6. **Psychological Abuse:** For causing psychological harm: Imprisonment for not more than one year or a fine of not more than ₦300,000 or both.

In addition to these laws, the Lagos State

government has also implemented a number of initiatives to address GBV including:

1. **Establishment of a Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT):** The DVRT was established in 2010 in response to the increasing numbers of domestic violence cases in the state. The team is a multi-agency team that provides a coordinated response to domestic violence incidents. The team includes representatives from police, social services, and healthcare providers. As of 2022, the DVRT provided support to over 200 victims of domestic abuse, and in 2023, they have also helped to secure the conviction of over 50 domestic violence offenders.

2. **Creation of shelters for survivors of GBV by the Lagos State Domestic Violence and Child Protection Agency (LDVSCPA):** The Lagos state government operates a number of shelters for survivors of GBV. These shelters provide self-accommodations, counseling, and support services to victims. Currently,

there are five government operated shelters for survivors of GBV in Lagos state. As at the year 2022, the shelters provided accommodations to over 300 survivors of GBV. And in the year 2023 the shelter provided counseling to over 250 survivors of GBV

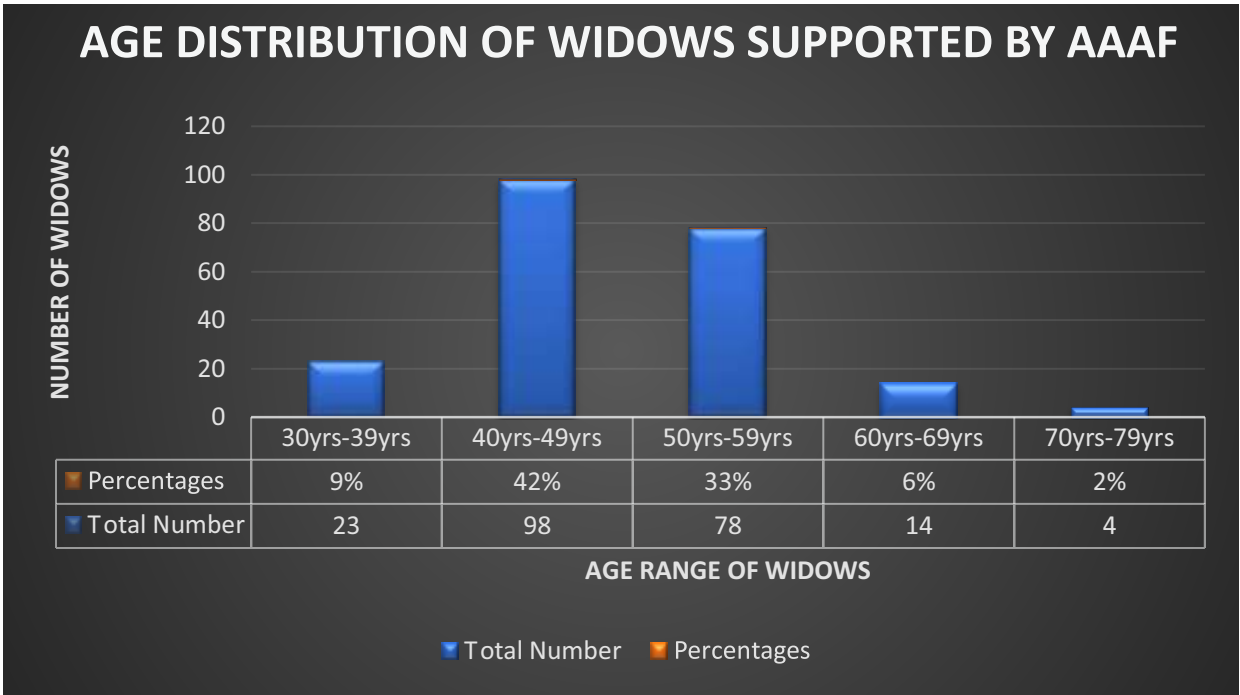
3. **Implementation of awareness raising campaign by UNICEF:** The Lagos state government has implemented a number of awareness-raising campaigns to educate the public about GBV. These campaigns have included Seminars, workshops, and public service announcements.

In 2021, the government conducted a series of seminars for school children on the prevention of GBV. They also launched a public service announcement campaign on signs of GBV and how to get help in the year 2022. And in the year 2023, the government partnered with local organizations to organize workshops on GBV for community members.

AAAF INTERVENTION:

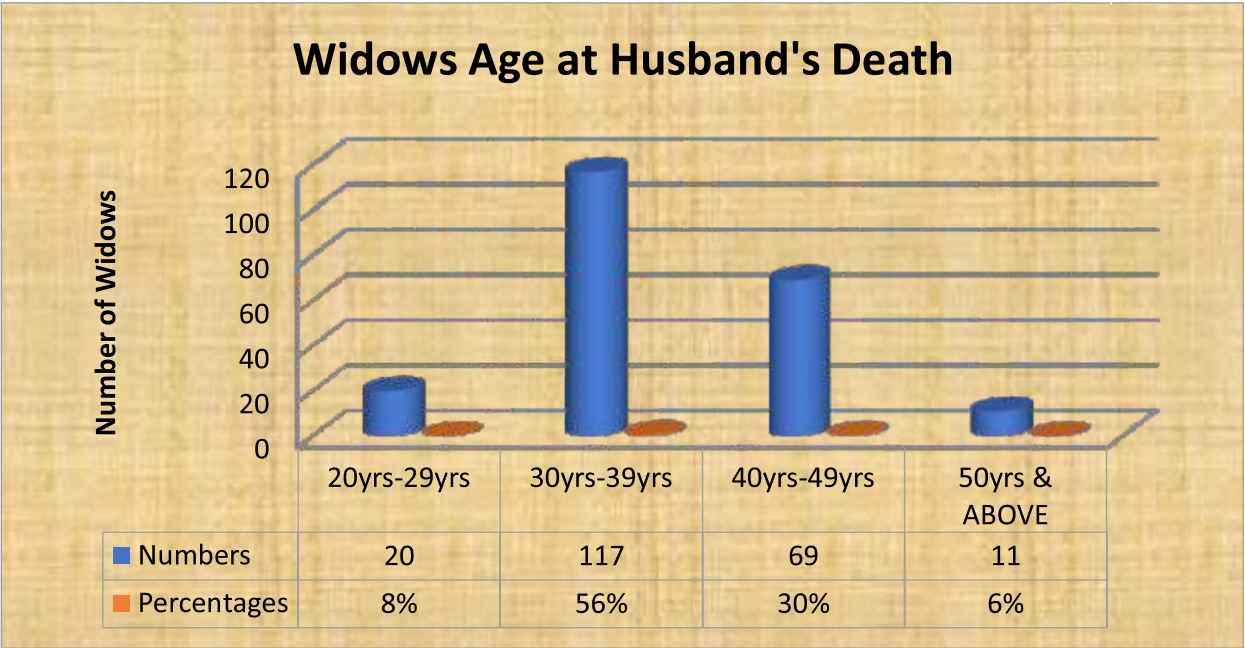
Widows Supported by AAAF: The Foundation conducted a survey to ascertain the age range of the widows supported, the Foundation supports 217 widows, their age range is represented on the chart below, the most predominant age range of the

widows is 40yrs-49yrs with 42%, the children of the widows are being supported with quality education. Societies with high rates of education completion have lower crime and void of gender-based violence, as captured in the chart below.



Widows Age at Husband's Death

The widows' age at husband's death: a survey to also ascertain the age range of the widows at husband's death, their age range is represented on the chart below, the most predominant age range of the widows is 30yrs-39yrs with 56%, they are categorized as young widows, as captured in the chart below.



Support and Economic Empowerment has helped to address Gender-Based Violence. This approach typically aims to empower the widows by increasing

their economic resources and reducing gender inequalities, it's build self-esteem and confidence.

